R E P O R T R E S U M E S

ED 012 578 JC 660 065

RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL AS JUNIOR COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS--AN ANALYSIS CONDUCTED IN FLORIDA PUBLIC JUNIOR COLLEGES.

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PUB DATE 65

EDRS PRICE MF-$0.25 HC-$0.28 7P.

DESCRIPTORS- *JUNIOR COLLEGES, *FACULTY, *FACULTY RECRUITMENT, INSTRUCTIONAL STAFF, TEACHERS, INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP, *TEACHER EVALUATION, FLORIDA,

SIXTY-SIX RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL OCCUPYING TEACHING POSITIONS IN 17 JUNIOR COLLEGES COMPRISED THE POPULATION OF THIS STUDY. A QUESTIONNAIRE WAS DISTRIBUTED TO ADMINISTRATORS, STUDENTS, AND THE RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL. NO STATISTICALLY SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES WERE FOUND BETWEEN RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL AND CAREER TEACHERS, AND NO SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES EXIST BETWEEN RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO ATTENDED GRADUATE SCHOOL AFTER RETIREMENT AND THOSE WHO DID NOT. IN THEIR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS, RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL WHO ATTENDED SERVICE ACADEMIES WERE RATED BY ADMINISTRATORS SIGNIFICANTLY LOWER THAN THOSE WHO DID NOT ATTEND THE ACADEMIES. ADMINISTRATORS AND RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL BOTH AGREE THAT THE RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL ARE QUALIFIED FOR A VARIETY OF TEACHING AREAS DEPENDING ON THE BACKGROUND AND EXPERIENCE OF THE INDIVIDUAL, BUT ESPECIALLY IN THE SCIENCE-MATHEMATICS AREAS. (HS)

ED012578

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RETIRED MILITARY PERSONNEL AS JUNIOR COLLEGE INSTRUCTORS: AN ANALYSIS CONDUCTED IN FLORIDA PUBLIC JUNIOR COLLEGES *

A study of retired military personnel teaching in Florida public junior colleges was recently completed at Florida State University by Dr. James T. Rogers under the direction of Dr. Raymond E. Schultz and Dr. Maurice L. Litton. Sixty-six retired military individuals occupying teaching positions in seventeen junior colleges throughout the state comprised the population of the investigation.

The study could not have been completed without the assistance and cooperation of presidents, deans, students, and retired military individuals teaching at each of the participating institutions and to them the writer is deeply indebted.

A summary of the investigation and its findings is presented below for whatever general distribution may seem appropriate.

The major prupose in the study was to investigate the professional effectiveness and the opinions concerning a career in junior college teaching of retired military personnel occupying full-time positions and teaching a minimum of two classes in Florida public junior colleges during the year 1963-64.

In the investigation, the writer designed and used questionnaires for eliciting opinions from administrators, students, and retired military personnel. In addition, the writer utilized the Teacher Evaluation Form, TE-1 to compare retired military personnel and career teachers, and to compare various groups within the population of retired military personnel. From TE-1 data collected and analyzed, no statistically significant differences were found to exist between retired military personnel and career teachers; no statistically significant differences were found to exist between retired military personnel who attended graduate school after retirement and those

* An article on this study appears in the Junior College Journal, May 1965, Vol. 35, No. 9, pp. 17-18. by Maurice L. Litton and James T. Rogers

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who did not; and no statistically significant differences were found to exist between retired military personnel who were academy graduates and those who were not except on variable three, RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHERS. On this variable, retired military personnel who attended service academies were found to be rated by administrators significantly lower than retired military personnel who did not attend service academies.

Conclusions

Subject to the limitations of the investigation, the following conclusions are warranted:

1. Retired military personnel do not differ significantly from career teachers in the estimation of administrators.

2. Retired military teachers function in an average to above average fashion in performance of professional duties.

3. Administrators responsible for the employment of teachers and retired military personnel both consider retired military personnel to be a valuable source of future junior college teachers provided adequate screening and selection procedures are used.

4. Going to graduate school after retirement is recommended by a majority of the administrators and a majority of the retired military personnel but it does not appear to make a significant difference in the way they are rated by administrators on the Form TE-1.

5. Administrators primarily responsible for the employment of teachers would not object to employing additional retired military personnel provided they were of the same high caliber as the ones who are presently teaching in Florida.

6. Administrators primarily responsible for the employment of teachers have experienced no major problems in the use of retired military personnel.

7. Administrators and retired military personnel would both agree that retired military personnel are qualified for a variety of teaching areas depending on the background and experience of the individual, but especially the Science/Mathematics area. They do not agree concerning the potential role that retired military personnel can play in administration: administrators consider teaching to be essential before retired military personnel can enter administration and retired military personnel consider themselves qualified for this area without additional experience.

8. According to administrators, retired military personnel accept favorably the purposes of the junior college and in certain schools they accept these purposes much better than do career teachers.

9. Retired military personnel and administrators primarily responsible for their employment hold different views concerning the reasons retired military personnel have chosen junior college teaching as a second career except for one, namely, previous teaching experience. In addition to this reason, administrators consider prestige of junior college teaching, age, educational level achieved, readily accessible educational opportunities (GI Bill), and a genuine desire to serve their country, to be the most important factors prompting retired military personnel to go into junior college teaching. Retired military personnel, on the other hand, in addition to previous teaching experience, consider encouragement from graduate school professors, the emphasis of the junior college on teaching rather than research, a desire to work with young people, and an offer of a job from an administrator, to be the primary factors influencing retired military personnel to choose junior college teaching as a second career.

10. Retired military personnel are favorably accepted by students and are considered to be average or above average in comparison with career teachers.

11. Students hold divergent opinions concerning the classroom environment of retired military personnel as compared to career teachers. Most felt there was no difference but the majority of those who noted a difference expressed a preference for the classroom environment of the retired military teacher.

12. Students do not show preference for or against retired military personnel when selecting a class but base their decision on the individual and his ability, not upon his background.

13. Retired military personnel have experienced very little difficulty in making the transition from military life to academic life.

14. Retired military personnel do not experience any greater difficulty in being reappointed than do career teachers.

15. Retired military personnel have been received in the majority of cases in a warm, friendly, and professional manner by their peers.

16. Retired military personnel would improve their chances of being employed if they attended graduate school before applying for teaching jobs.

17. The rank of retired military personnel does not appear to affect their work except in isolated cases involving other faculty members.

18. Retired military personnel do not form cliques, but go out of their way to avoid such.

19. Military teaching experience is considered by retired military personnel to be a definite asset and help in junior college teaching.

20. Retired military personnel are satisfied with their choice of junior college teaching as a second career and would, given the chance, make the same choice again.

21. Retired military personnel find junior college teaching a rewarding experience which can be primarily attributed to the pleasure and stimulation that comes from influencing and working with young people.

22. Retired military personnel were primarily influenced in their choice of Florida as a state in which to teach by the recreational possibilities and their attendance at a Florida graduate school.

23. Retired military personnel would advise military individuals contemplating a career in junior college teaching to: attend graduate school to update themselves and become oriented to the junior college; get a master's degree; start planning well in advance of retirement in order to circumvent possible difficulties with certification and graduate school entrance requirements; leave the past behind, especially the rank; make sure that teaching is what is really wanted; and be prepared to work.

24. Administrators primarily responsible for the employment of teachers would advise military individuals contemplating a career in junior college teaching to: attend graduate school before applying for teaching jobs; apply for teaching rather than administrative positions; play down the rank and military background; apply for teaching positions in the Science/Mathematics area; and visit various junior colleges before making a commitment to the junior college field.